

GRAUSTARK


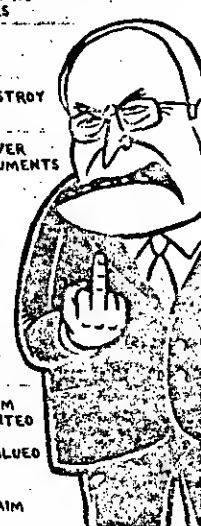
The first 'zine for the postal play of Diplomacy, a game of negotiation and conflict designed by Allan B. Calhamer and published by Hasbro

#771

2002D, "Spring 1909"; 2004C, "Fall 1905"

7 January 2006

WHO'S THE BIGGER DICK?

 <p>CLAIMED TO HAVE A SECRET PLAN TO END THE WAR IN VIETNAM</p> <p>ORCHESTRATED SECRET BOMBING OF CAMBODIA</p> <p>ENTRUSTED A MAN NAMED LIDDY TO STOP DAMAGING WHITE HOUSE LEAKS</p> <p>STOKED PEOPLE'S FEAR OF COMMUNISM</p> <p>CREATED THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY IN 1970</p> <p>REFUSED TO TURN OVER WATERGATE TAPES</p> <p>HOUNDED BY BOB WOODWARD</p> <p>HIS SWEARING AND VICIOUS STATEMENTS ON TAPE WERE SHOCKING</p> <p>WATERGATE SCANDAL SENT HIS APPROVAL RATING TO 25%</p> <p>AFTER RESIGNING THE PRESIDENCY, WAS GRANTED A CONTROVERSIAL PAROON</p> <p>SAID "I AM NOT A CROOK"</p>	<p>by WARD "TRICKY?" BIG TIME." SUTTON</p> <p>DENIES HAVING HAD A SECRET PLAN TO START THE WAR IN IRAQ</p> <p>ORCHESTRATES SECRET TORTURE OF PRISONERS IN IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, GUANTANAMO BAY, ...</p> <p>ENTRUSTED A MAN NAMED LIBBY TO MAKE DAMAGING WHITE HOUSE LEAKS</p> <p>STOKES PEOPLE'S FEAR OF TERRORISM</p> <p>HAS BEEN TRYING TO DESTROY IT EVER SINCE</p> <p>REFUSES TO TURN OVER ENERGY TASK FORCE DOCUMENTS</p> <p>COURTED BY BOB WOODWARD</p> <p>HIS SWEARING AND VICIOUS STATEMENTS IN PUBLIC ARE ROUTINE</p> <p>PLAMEGATE SCANDAL HAS SENT HIS APPROVAL RATING TO 19%</p> <p>AFTER RESIGNING FROM HALLIBURTON, WAS GRANTED A CONTROVERSIAL RETIREMENT PACKAGE VALUED AT \$20 MILLION</p> <p>HAS MADE NO SUCH CLAIM</p> 
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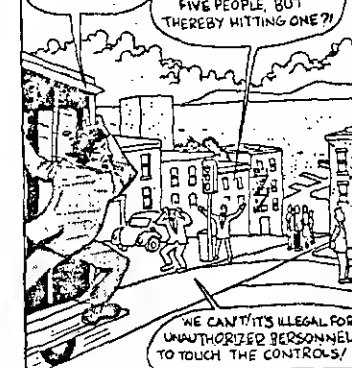
TOM THE DANCING BUG By Ruben Bolling

OUTLAW TORTURE ?!
WHAT IF WE CAPTURE A TERRORIST WHO KNOWS WHERE A TICKING NUCLEAR TIME BOMB IS! SHOULDN'T WE BE ALLOWED TO TORTURE HIM TO GET HIM TO TALK?



Dick Cheney's PHILOSOPHICAL
**THOUGHT-EXPERIMENT
LEGISLATION**

A TERRORIST CUT THE BRAKES ON THIS TROLLEY!



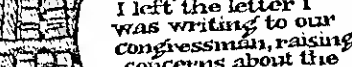
DO WE SWITCH THE TRACKS TO AVOID HITTING FIVE PEOPLE, BUT THEREBY HITTING ONE?!

WE CAN'T! IT'S ILLEGAL FOR UNAUTHORIZED PERSONNEL TO TOUCH THE CONTROLS!

KEEP LOOKING UP AT THE FLAG!



YOU'LL MAKE A BETTER IMPRESSION



Have you seen where I left the letter I was writing to our congressman, raising concerns about the Patriot Act?



On the dining room table.



THERE'S A BOMB HIDDEN IN TIMES SQUARE, AND THIS BABY SWALLOWED INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO DEFUSE IT!



DAMN THOSE LEGISLATORS WHO SHORTSIGHTEDLY OUTLAWED RIPPING OPEN LIVE BABIES!

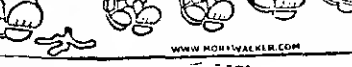
THIS MONKEY HAS BEEN RANDOMLY HITTING KEYS FOR AN INFINITE NUMBER OF YEARS! NOW IT'S BLOGGING THE CURRENT U.S. NUCLEAR LAUNCH CODES! WE MUST STOP IT!



NO! ANIMAL RIGHTS NUTS HAVE MADE SHOOTING MONKEYS ILLEGAL!



EXCUSE ME, MAY WE SEE A MENU?



DEPENDS.



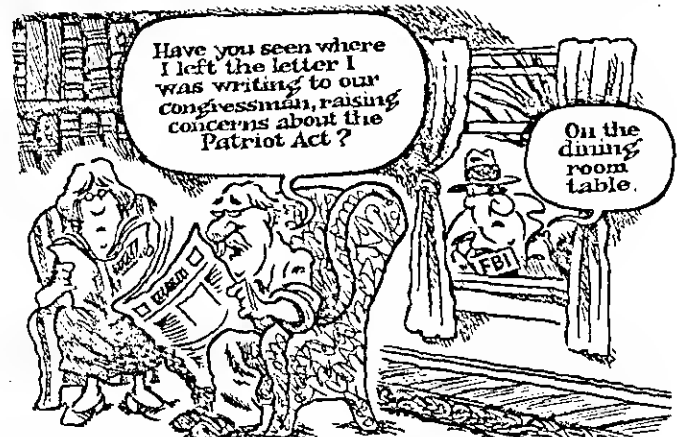
DO YOU HAVE A CURRENT IDENTIFICATION CARD?



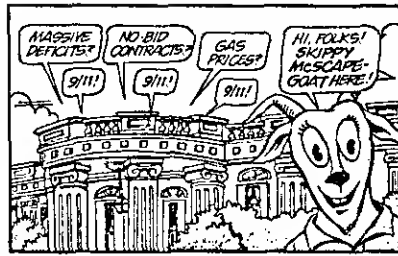
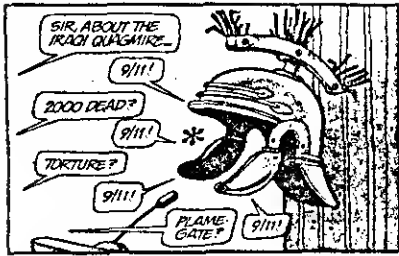
BOY, THIS HOMELAND SECURITY STUFF IS STARTING TO GET OUT OF HAND



BLONDIE



Happy New Year where allowed by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court



Letters

Foul Play?

To the Editor:

The review of "The Chosen," by Jerome Karabel (Nov. 6), is accompanied by a photograph of George W. Bush playing rugby at Yale. As a longtime rugby player, I had heard the president had played rugby, and was curious about the type of player he had been. Section 10.4 of the rugby lawbook states: "A player must not tackle (or try to tackle) an opponent above the line of the shoulders. A tackle around the opponent's neck or head is dangerous play." The photo shows the future president clearly violating the law for foul play, and tackling another player by the neck. Although rugby is considered a rough game, the laws on foul play are written to protect someone from unnecessarily getting hurt. Perhaps George W. Bush's experiences at Yale provided the framework for his presidency.

TOM RUBEY
Woodbury, Minn.

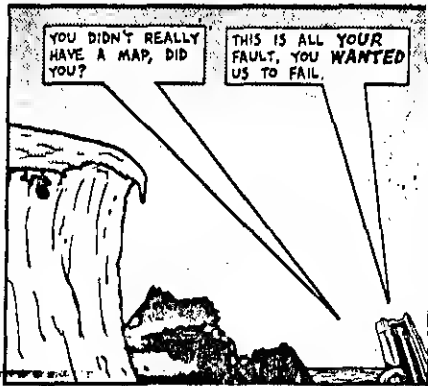
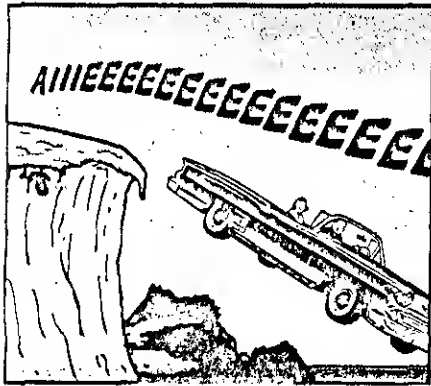
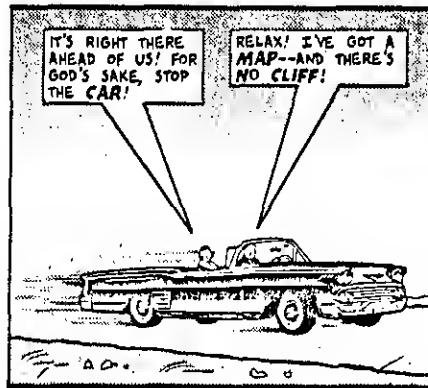
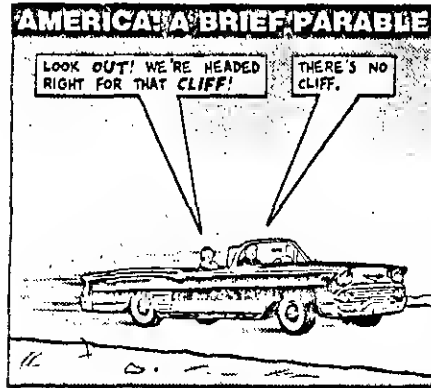
Screwing Up America

To the Editor:

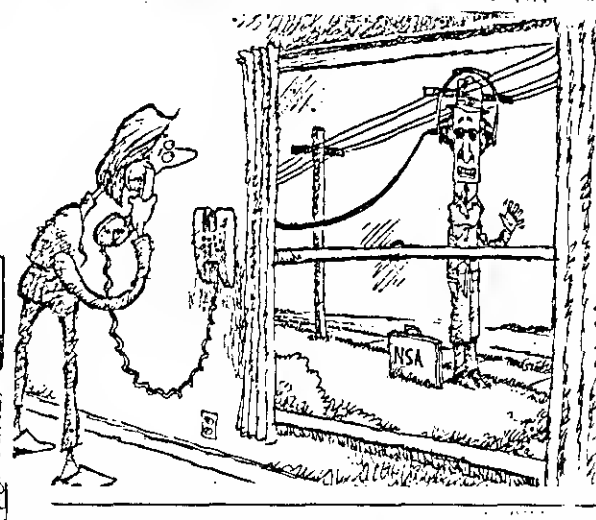
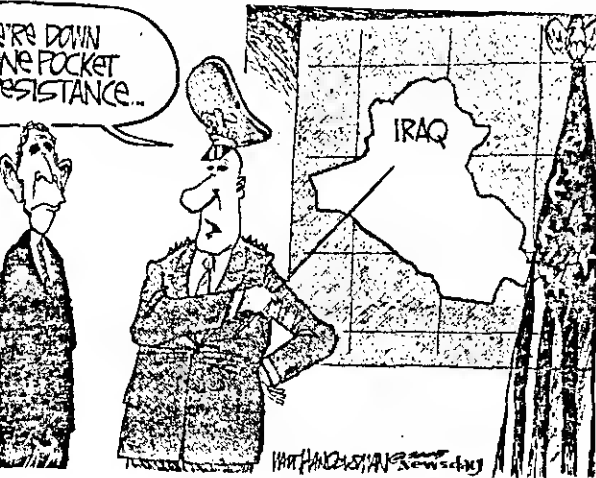
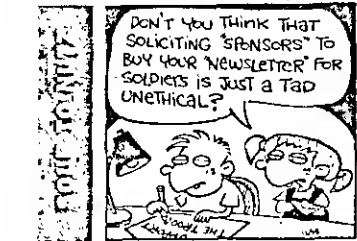
In his review of Bernard Goldberg's "100 People Who Are Screwing Up America" (Aug. 28), Richard Brookhiser makes a welcome and eloquent plea for elevated debate. He goes on to say, "The challenge of our lifetime is a religious totalitarian death cult." While it is a relief to see an intelligent conservative finally point a finger at the Bush administration, I do feel that Islamic extremists are part of the problem, too.

PETER ATKINS
Los Angeles

THIS MODERN WORLD By Tom Tomorrow



thismodernworld.com ©2005 Tom Tomorrow



THE 2005 IGNOBEL PRIZES

While the rest of Europe shivers in the winter weather, the annual tourist season draws thousands to the Four And A Half Kingdoms, high in the Balkan Massif. The region's hot springs, geysers, fumaroles, and steam vents maintain a warm climate, and tourists are also attracted to the many festivals which take place at this time of year.

The first stop on most tours is the Winter Solstice Festival in the ancient matriarchy of Skandalutz. This orgiastic festivity probably dates from the Old Stoned Age, and features the selection of a new king in the Sacred Lottery, in which the names of all adult males, Skandals and tourists, are entered. After the Sacred Feast, the winner is married to the Queen, who is also High Priestess of the Mother Goddess.

This follows the sacrifice of the previous year's king to the Mother Goddess, after which he is eaten at the Sacred Feast. This does not notably deter male attendance. As John Lennon said to Janis Joplin at the 1967 Festival, "Only one bloke gets chosen king, but everyone gets laid!"

Last year's king was chosen under the name of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, although there is some doubt as to whether he really is the al-Qaeda leader of that name. The American Yippie leader Julius Orange, who has been hiding out in the Balkan Massif ever since the Chicago riots of 1968, claims that several people have been using that name. When asked about this in 2004, the king replied, "I am the dread terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Ask about a franchise in your area."

Whatever his actual name, this king was sacrificed on schedule, and made his final appearance at the Sacred Feast as a pilaf. The new King of Skandalutz is Michael Brown, formerly director of the U. S. Federal Emergency Management Agency. Almost as soon as his name was announced, he received a message from President Bush, proclaiming that "Brownie would do one heckuva job" in his new post. The speed of this message led Julius Orange to declare that "Everyone knows the Sacred Lottery is fixed," an accusation that over the centuries has been frequently made but never proven. Later, Orange cited the events of 998 AD, in which the horse of Pope Formosus II bolted and carried him over the border just in time for him to be entered in, and to win, that year's Sacred Lottery.

From there, those tourists still capable of motion went on to the awards of the Ignobel Prizes in the Salon du Grand-Duc of that elegant Gilded Age hostelry, the Hôtel de Wogastisburg et Metropole in Wogastisburger-Neustadt, capital of the Grand Duchy of Wogastisburg-Schlampenbüttel. (This is the "half kingdom" of the region's popular name, since it is technically a feudal dependency of the Holy Roman Empire.) As usual, the five prizes were presented by Aldo Ignobel, grandson of their founder Alfons Ignobel (1838-1937), the notorious master spy, spy master, smuggler, counterfeiter, currency manipulator, arms merchant, confidence man, and caterer of *coups d'etat*. The terms of his will, which was probated in Wogastisburg-Schlampenbüttel by the Court of Last Chancery, provides that the prizes are to be awarded annually by a self-perpetuating seven-member board which must include a descendant of Ignobel and a representative of the Bank der Sieben Zwergen, which administers the Ignobel fortune. There are present Aldo Ignobel and the distinguished Zürich gnome Rumpelsoftware. The identities of the other five members are traditionally kept secret. Two entirely different lists of them have been given on line, one from the Internet reference site Ickypedia, and the other from the notorious "conspiracy theory" website <www.bohdan.iknowsomethingyoudon'tknow.nyaa.nyaa.nyaa.dot.com>.

The 2005 War Prize went to Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY) for her loyal support of the American conquest and annexation of Iraq, and of the concept of an "Axis of Evil" which, as Ignobel said, "Can be confidently expected to generate still more profitable wars." He went on to say that "This can be regarded as complementary to the earlier award of the War Prize to President Bush, since without the loyal support of Democratic members of Congress he would have been unable to present his war as the unanimous effort of the entire American people." The award was accepted for her by her colleague Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY), another faithful supporter of war.

The Espionage Prize also went to an American, John Negroponte, who was appointed Director of National Intelligence by President Bush. This, according to his award,

ITALY AND RUSSIA PACK UP AND MOVE ELSEWHERE

ENGLAND (Wiedemeyer): A Mos-Sev; A St.P-Mos; F Bar-St.P(n.c.); F Nwy S F Bar-St.P(n.c.); F Nrg S F Nwy; F Lon holds.

FRANCE (Lischett): A Tyr-Tri; A Ven S A Tyr-Tri; A Pie S A Ven; A Apu S A Ven; F Tus-Rom; F Nap & F Tyr S F Tus-Rom; F Tur-Ion; A Par holds.

GERMANY (Quirk): A Gal-Ukr; A War S A Gal-Ukr; A Pru & A Liv S A War; F Bot & F Bal S A Liv; A Boh-Vie.

ITALY (Verheiden): A Rom-Ven; F Adr S A Rom-Ven; A Tri-Tyr; A Bud S RUSSIAN A Rum-Gal; F Ion-Apu.

RUSSIA (Neal): A Ukr S ENGLISH A Mos-War[sic]; F Eas-Ion; F Aeg S F Eas-Ion; A Vie-Tyr; A Rum-Gal; A Alb-Tri; A Sev S A Ukr.

Underlined moves are not possible. The Italian A Rom is dislodged and annihilated. Italy retreats F Ion-Gre and Russia retreats A Ukr-Rum. The deadline for "Fall 1909" moves is NOON, FRIDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2006.

Michael Neal has sent in a report on a brief return to New Orleans, which will be printed in the next issue. For Andy Lischett's telephone number see p. 11. For the reasons why this issue is late, and why it is not presently a good idea to leave your moves on my answering machine, see the report of 2004C on p. 8. If you need more time for the next moves, I can delay the publication of the next issue.

WHEN DO YOU EXPIRE?

The subscriptions of the following readers expire with the indicated issue of Graustark. This information is valid to the date of 7 January 2006. See p. 6 for information about extending your subscription or joining a new game.

772 - Jim Dapkus	777 - W. Andrew York	780 - Michael Neal
777 - Eric Verheiden	780 - Mike Fisher	799 - Brenton Verploeg

PLEASE STAND BY

I am willing to take over games that have been abandoned by their gamesmasters. So if you are a postal gamesmaster who is no longer able to publish, or if you are a player in a postal game of regular Diplomacy that has gone for two or three months without a move being published, please get in touch with the Orphan Games Director, Michael Lowrey. (See p. 11 for his address.) If the game is to continue in Graustark, I would need the addresses of all active players, the current position, and a list of who owns which supply centers. If subscription money can be passed along to me, fine. Otherwise I will ask players to join a new game in Graustark, or to subscribe to Graustark if they do not already do so. Players who resign or drop out can be replaced by Graustark stand-by players.

Stand-by players are always needed for postal Diplomacy games in Graustark. If you volunteer as a stand-by, you may be called upon whenever a current player misses a move. If you send in moves for that country for the next turn, and the present player does not, you will take over play of that position. No game fee will be asked, though you should keep your subscription current, or enroll in a new Graustark game. No stand-by will be called upon in a game in which he or she has already played.

Stand-by volunteers who are willing to take on additional games of postal Diplomacy are listed below. A stand-by player who is already playing in a Graustark game is indicated by "*". If you wish your name added to or removed from this list, please let me know. These data are accurate to the date of 7 January 2006.

Hank Alme	Michael Neal*	Fred Wiedemeyer*
John R. Biehl	Michael Quirk*	
Harley Jordan	Eric Verheiden*	

PATRIOTISM - XLV

PATRIOTISM is the principal cause of war.

PATRIOTISM is the unprincipled cause of war.

PATRIOTISM is the Pentagon ceasing to use the term "land mines". Instead, they are now being called "networked munitions". (*New York Times*, 13 September 2005)

PATRIOTISM is a claim made to Mahmoud Abbas by Bush the Son, that "God directed him to invade Iraq and Afghanistan." (*Newsday*, 7 October 2005)

PATRIOTISM is the refusal of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to rule out American military action against Iran. (Al Kamen, *Washington Post*, 24 October 2005)

PATRIOTISM is a briefing given by Brig. Gen. Allison A. Hickey (USAF) about the need for upgrading Air National Guard units, using maps that showed U. S. warplanes hitting targets in an unnamed country just east of the Tigris River and Kuwait. (*Ibid.*) In case you don't have an atlas handy, that's Iran.

PATRIOTISM is support of this notion by the USAF, which is upgrading bases in Afghanistan, Iraq, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Kyrgyzstan, all with Iran in convenient range. (Eric Schmitt, *New York Times*, 18 September 2005)

PATRIOTISM is the New Jersey law, dating from the 18th century, that makes it illegal to try to talk anyone out of enlisting in the U. S. armed forces.

PATRIOTISM is the reluctance of people to try to justify this law.

PATRIOTISM is the New York law, dating from the 20th century, that makes it illegal to issue a driver's license to a member of the Communist Party.

PATRIOTISM is the reluctance of people to try to justify this law.

PATRIOTISM is the secret "Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court" (FISC), created in 1978 for the purpose of secretly issuing warrants for random federal surveillance of telephone calls and e-mail, and which in the subsequent 27 years has issued over 10,000 such warrants and refused only five.

PATRIOTISM is the even more secret Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court of Review, to which adverse decisions by the FISC can be appealed, and which has heard only one case in 27 years.

PATRIOTISM is the decision by Bush the Son, that he nevertheless has the presidential power to ignore the FISC and authorize eavesdropping without warrants, and never mind what that stodgy old Bill of Rights says.

PATRIOTISM is the President of the United States going on the air to announce to the public that he has committed a crime.

PATRIOTISM is simultaneously demanding "limited government" and endorsing the unlimited warrantless wiretapping to which President Bush thinks his presidential powers entitle him.

PATRIOTISM is testing for "radiation" of unspecified character near over 120 mosques and other Islamic sites. (James Gordon Meek, *New York Daily News*, 24 December 2005)

PATRIOTISM is the naive belief that the critical masses of uranium 235 and plutonium 239 have been kept secret. (They are, respectively, 15 kg. [33 lbs.] and 5 kg. [11 lbs.])

PATRIOTISM is the claim by Federal District Court Judge William Skrelny that invasive six-hour body searches of American Muslims returning from a conference on "Reviving the Islamic Spirit" in Toronto are permissible. (*New York Times*, 23 December 2005)

PATRIOTISM is two Federal Transportation Security Administration baggage screeners at Kennedy Airport finding credit cards during baggage searches, and going on shopping sprees with them. (*New York Daily News*, 15 December 2005)

PATRIOTISM is a secret directive given to the CIA by Bush the Son, authorizing them to use illegal methods of interrogation. (Nat Hentoff, *Village Voice*, 14 December 2005)

PATRIOTISM is the declaration by conservative columnist Charles Krauthammer, that legal torture is a "moral necessity". (*New York Times*, 11 December 2005)

PATRIOTISM is the support of this position by conservative columnist Rich Lowry. (*New York Post*, 15 November 2005)

PATRIOTISM is ejecting Lorrie Heasley from a Southwest Airlines plane because she wore a T-shirt poking fun at Bush the Son, Cheney, and Rice. (*New York Times*, 9 Oct. 2005)

PATRIOTISM is the principal cause of war.

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY

Today's Terrorism Alert Color Code is Ashen Gray, the color to which President Bush wishes to reduce the Constitution.

*

Graustark is the Very First bulletin for the postal play of Diplomacy. It is published every fourth Saturday by John Boardman, 234 East 19th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11226-5302. Diplomacy is a board game of negotiation and conflict for the period of World War I. It was designed by Allan B. Calhamer and is now published by Hasbro. Another new postal Diplomacy game is now being organized in Graustark, at a game fee of \$35. (For Canadian and Mexican addresses the game fee is \$50, and for other foreign addresses it is \$100, or 85 euros in cash.) This game fee includes a subscription to Graustark for as long as the game lasts, whether or not you are eliminated. With your game fee send in a list of the countries you'd like to play, in your order of preference, and I'll try to put you as close to the top of that list as I can. If you do not already have the postal rules for Diplomacy, which were last published in Graustark #749, let me know when you send in your game fee, and I'll send you a copy.

This is
O At
P Great
E Intervals
R This
A Appears
T To
I Inflamm
O Optic
N Nerves

Graustark subscriptions for non-players are 10 issues for \$15 for U. S. addresses, and \$40 or 35 euros for others. Back issues as available are 10 issues for \$5 for U. S. addresses. To foreign addresses, back issues have the same price as for foreign subscriptions. # 2118

Players who phone in their moves should call me at 718-693-1579. (The other phone number, which I have printed in previous issues, is no longer valid.) There is an answering machine which can take your moves if I'm out. I do not have an e-mail address.

I want to again remind players that the U. S. Postal "Service" is not capable of reliably getting mail here in less than a week. Please take this into account in sending in your moves. If, a few times, your moves have arrived here by mail in less than a week, do not assume that this will always be the case.

*

Graustark readers who are interested in postal games which don't run here, are invited to write to the publishers of 'zines with which I trade, and ask what game openings they have. For their addresses, see all the readers indicated by "(T)" for "trade" in the Graustark Directory on pp. 10-11. Several of these publishers run a wide variety of postal games.

*

Dear Diary:

Leaving my office one afternoon, I was in the lobby and looked across the street, where I was headed with a letter. To my shock, the familiar large blue mailbox was gone. I turned to the lobby attendant and noted its disappearance.

He stated, "They have been having a lot of trouble with the box, and had to take it away."

"What kind of trouble?" I asked.

He said, "People keep filling it up!"

Bert Blumberg

The new postal rates are now effective. They apply only to domestic rates; rates for foreign mail are set by a different process. The first ounce of first-class mail will be 39c, and each additional ounce will be 24c. Postcards will be 24c, plus 2c for pre-paid cards. The first pound of priority mail will be \$4.05. (Where do they come up with these peculiar numbers?)

For further information on the new rates, log on to usps.com/ratecase or ask at your post office about subscribing to their publication *Mailer's Companion*.

(With thanks to Andy York for this information.)

*

The big gaming convention Origins 2006 will take place, as usual, in the convention center at Columbus, Ohio on the weekend of 29 June-2 July 2006. Membership is \$40 per person from Games Manufacturers Association, Suite 230, 280 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43215. The telephone number for reservations at the adjoining Hyatt Regency Columbus is 614-463-1234. I expect to attend, along with my son-in-law Dean Wright and as many grandsons as can clear time from summer jobs to drive there with us.

*

A new game shop opened two weeks ago in Meredith, NH, as I learned while visiting Ed Meškys, a friend of over forty years standing, who lives in nearby Center Harbor. The shop is called Geeks and Gamers, and is located at 14 Main Street, Meredith, NH 03253. The telephone number is 603-279-9055, and the e-mail address is

<www.geeksandgamers.online.com>.

Readers located conveniently to upper New England might want to look in on Geeks and Gamers. It stocks comic books as well as games, and has tables for in-store games. They have collectible card games as well as new board games. The staff is very outgoing and helpful.

*

Shortage of space and time requires a postponement of the "Dungeons & Christians" column to the next issue, by which time I hope to get caught up on information provided by Paul Cardwell Jr. and other writers in CAR-PGa Newsletter, published monthly by Cardwell, 1127 Cedar, Bonham, TX 75418 at \$12.00 a year for domestic, and \$13.50 a year for foreign, addresses. It keeps us posted on attacks on Dungeons & Dragons, other role-playing games, and collectible card games, most of which are grounded in wacky interpretations of Christian doctrine.

Meanwhile, the creationists of Dover, PA, have suffered a crushing defeat both in court and at the polls. They dominated the local school board, and with the encouragement of Fundamentalist Christians across the country had voted to include allegedly rival theories to evolution by natural selection in the curriculum. They were ready to fight any test case brought in court against this notion by scientists.

Then elections took place, and all eight anti-evolution Republicans were replaced by Democrats who vowed to throw out this notion. This was quickly followed by a court decision that firmly ejected the essentially religious notion of "intelligent design" from the school curriculum in Dover. The new school board voted not to appeal this very sensibly written decision, and to eliminate "intelligent design" from the curriculum. The judge's decision eloquently described the distinction between science and religion, and connected "intelligent design" to the openly religious notion of "natural theology" proposed two centuries ago by a Church of England theologian. His decision also noted that the proponents of "intelligent design" did not intend to ensure "fairness" between two allegedly equally valid theories of human origins, but to teach Christian doctrines in the public schools, and that these proponents had lied about their intentions.

Needless to say, some Christian were furious. Rev. Pat Robertson, fresh from his comic-opera attempt to incite the assassination of the President of Venezuela, grumbled that if a natural disaster hits Dover, its residents might try calling on Darwin rather than Jesus for help.

Now the struggle shifts to Kansas. In 1999, a conservative majority on the state school board voted to teach creationism in that state's public schools. In 2000 this plan was endorsed by George W. Bush, Al Gore, and every other candidate for the presidential nomination of either party except for Senator Bradley (D-IL). But later that year, the people of Kansas voted that conservative majority out of office.

The creationists got back in in 2005, and "made Kansas the most aggressive challenger to evolution in the nation, by adopting standards that redefined science itself so that it is not explicitly limited to natural explanations." (*New York Times*, 1 January 2006) But, as Arkansas discovered a quarter century earlier, this not only makes the state a national laughingstock, but also hampers efforts to attract computer programmers and other high-tech specialists to work in a state where their children will be taught biology out of Genesis. And major universities would be unlikely to admit students who present Kansas high school diplomas which signify that they are not equipped to deal with science.

However, it will not come to this. Kansas's openly religious definition of "science" will cause courts to reject this new curriculum, citing without further ado the well-known U. S. Supreme Court decision in *Epperson v. Arkansas*. Some Christians will persist in their belief that evolution by natural selection has been foisted on the educational system by a sinister little conspiracy of atheistic scientists, instead of being the fundamental organizing principle of the biological sciences, which are incomprehensible without it. But they will have no more influence than the people who claim that the Earth is flat, and that the whole space program is a governmental hoax.

Indeed, there are so many rival religious theories of creation, all of them unprovable assertions, that they have been made the base of parody. There is an Internet joke about a "flying spaghetti monster" which created the universe, and this is no more

(continued on p. 9)

ITALY AND RUSSIA FIGHT GERMANY; ENGLAND FIGHTS DESTINY

This past week I have discovered a problem with my answering machine. It will take messages, but will not yield them up. At the time I discovered this, the moves of several players were not yet in. So I telephoned or wrote to them, and eventually got moves for everyone.

The telephone number given by John R. Biehl, and printed on p. 10 of this issue, is no longer in service. He reports that his new number is a cell phone, 604-816-0460.

Until further notice, players should not leave messages on my answering machine. If a live person is not available to take down your orders, call back later, preferably in the evening. My home phone number remains 718-693-1579.

ENGLAND (Koch): F Iri-Liv.

FRANCE (Wiedemeyer): A Lon-Edi; A Pic holds; F Eng-Mid; F Naf-Tun; F Wes-Tyr; A Mar-Spa; A Pie S GERMAN A Vie-Tyr.

GERMANY (Mathias): A Edi-Liv; A Nwy-St.P: F Nth C FRENCH A Lon-Edi; F Bar S A Nwy-St.P; A Boh-Gal; A Vie-Tyr; A Sil-War; A Hol-Kie; A Mun S A Vie-Tyr; A Pru S A Sil-War.

ITALY (Mooney): A Tri-Vie; A Bud S A Tri-Vie; A Tyr-Boh; F Apu-Nap; F Tun holds; F Ion S F Tun; A Ven-Pie.

RUSSIA (Biehl): A Rum S A Gal; F Bla-Con; A Ukr-War; A Mos S A Ukr-War; A Gal S ITALIAN A Bud-Vie[sic].

TURKEY (Bruce): F Aeg-Con; A Con-Bul; F Ank-Bla; A Gre S A Con-Bul.

Underlined moves are not possible. Italy retreats A Vie-Tyr. The High Combatant Powers now control the following supply centers:

ENGLAND: Liv. (1)

FRANCE: Bel, Bre, Lon, Mar, Par, Por, Spa. (7)

GERMANY: Ber, Den, Edi, Hol, Kie, Mun, Nwy, St.P, Swe. (9)

ITALY: Bud, Nap, Rom, Ser, Tri, Tun, Ven, Vie. (8)

RUSSIA: Mos, Rum, Sev, War. (4)

TURKEY: Ank, Bul, Con, Gre, Smy. (5)

Italy and Turkey may each build one unit, and Germany and Russia must each remove one. The deadline for these "Winter 1905" orders is NOON, FRIDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2006. If you need more time, I can delay the publication of the next issue.

BERLIN (AP): The Kaiser has returned to Berlin, missing the annual Oktoberfest in Heidelberg. Rumors reached the Kaiser that various special desserts were being sent to Him by some of His neighboring monarchs, so He eagerly returned to have a ham sandwich and await them.

MUNICH PALACE KITCHEN: "Who sent all this caviar, tuna, and sardines? Everyone knows that the Kaiser is sick of seafood. No wonder He left for Berlin. We must find these Yaks, to entice Him back. Send out the Black Guard, to search for them. And someone recall the Head Chef. The Pope sent his own emissaries to receive the recipe for Pasties."

ROMA TEMPORARIA (URRP): Fabulus Flavorus, Chief Chef to Emperor Glutunus VI, announced that he was sending to the German Kaiser ten pounds of, and the recipe for, the popular Roman pickled fish sauce *garum*. "It goes well on everything, even pasties," he said.

ANAKHIT, SKANDALUTZ (URRP): Gertrude Greatgirth, the Queen's personal chef, today announced that the Kaiser of Germany would soon receive a shipment of *Dinichthys* caviar, the world's rarest, from a fish found only in Loch Mess. "We believe this fish is extinct everywhere else," she told the press. "The rarity of this caviar is due to the dangers in procuring it." The *Dinichthys* is believed by some cryptozoologists to be the reality behind the rumors about a Loch Mess monster.

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY (continued from p. 7)

provable or disprovable than the two accounts of "creation" in Genesis. (Yes, *two*. One begins in Genesis 1:1, and the other in Genesis 2:4. Obviously, two separate stories were conflated.) My own remote ancestors worked out something even more wacky. Allegedly three brothers killed and butchered a giant, and built the world out of his fragments. They had it all carefully worked out. The giant's flesh became the soil, his bones became the rocks, his blood became the waters, his hair became vegetation, his skull became the sky, his brains became the clouds, heaven was built on his eyebrows, and the maggots in his flesh became dwarfs. Any teacher who is required to teach "creation science" can start the class on this one.

(Where did the giant and his killers come from? Where did the bible's god come from? Ain't logic wonderful?)

*

Apparently it was not until the day before the new postal rates become effective that any newspapers printed pictures of the new 39c stamp. But the numerical value of 39c is not printed on the stamp, which is labeled only "First Class Mail". This stamp should therefore not be used on mail directed outside the United States. The Universal Postal Union has this pettifogging regulation that only stamps denominated with Arabic numerals are valid for use in the international mails.

*

I had originally intended to print in this issue my review of John Maddox Roberts' *SPQR IX: The Princess and the Pirates*, the ninth book in his *SPQR* series of the detective adventures of Senator Decius Caecilius Metellus Junior (b. 90 BCE). However it got crowded out by the annual report of the award of the Ignobel Prizes, and the time pressure under which this issue was prepared. It will appear in the next issue.

And there seems to be a problem in the numbering or chronology of the books in this series, possibly arising from the fact that its more recent books were printed in German translation by Goldmann before the original English editions appeared from St. Martin's Press. For example, *SPQR VIII*, set in 53 BCE, was *Die Rache der Flußgötter* in German and *The River God's Vengeance* in the original English. (It was reviewed in *Graustark* #762, with a query about why the German translator had turned the river god from singular to plural.) But the next German translations were listed as:

SPQR IX: In Namens Caesar ("In the Name of Caesar")

SPQR X: Die Schiffe der Kleopatra ("The Ships of Cleopatra")

SPQR XI: Mord am Vesuv ("Murder at Vesuvius")

(These English re-translations of the titles are my own. I am not at present certain what the original English titles are.)

However, the latest book in this series to be published in English is *SPQR IX: The Princess and the Pirates* (2005), set in 51 BCE. At a guess, this is the book published in German as *SPQR X: Die Schiffe der Kleopatra*. What became of *In the Name of Caesar* I do not at present know.

*

And, while we're on the topic, it has been almost three years since I last published, in *Graustark* #746, a bibliography of crime novels with historical settings. I plan to update this bibliography in the near future, probably in May for the 43rd anniversary issue. Readers who know of such novels which may have escaped my attention are invited to send in bibliographic information about these books. Readers are also invited to send in their own reviews of such books.

*

Some time ago I cited some cases of people presenting "million-dollar bills" for purchases or currency exchange. I have just discovered where these alleged bills came from. They are advertisements, printed in Reisterstown, MD, whose fronts bear a strong resemblance to U. S. currency but carry tiny print asserting that "This note is not legal tender for any debt, public or private". They depict the Statue of Liberty, which does not appear on any real U. S. currency. What is superficially a Federal Reserve Bank seal actually reads "Reisterstown Millionaires Group", and the green seal reads not "The Department of the Treasury" but "The Department of Big Bucks". But those pitchmen

THE GRAUSTARK DIRECTORY

Players in a current postal Diplomacy games are indicated by its Boardman Number, with the initial of the country being played, and with "S" indicating an active stand-by player. (E. g., "2002C-R" or "2002D-FS".) Paying subscribers will be indicated by the number of the issue with which the subscription expires. Other designations are:

N: entrant in a new postal Diplomacy game now being organized in Graustark. (See p. 6 for details.)

T: trade copy

C: complimentary copy for a gamer

R: complimentary copy for a non-gamer interested in the mystery novel reviews

U: uncomplimentary copy

This directory is accurate to the date of 6 January 2006. Please let me know of any corrections or additions that need to be made, particularly if you want your nine-digit ZIP code, phone number, fax number, or e-mail address added to your listing. This is particularly important for electronic addresses, which seem to change more frequently than do postal addresses.

If you are already a Graustark subscriber when you decide to send in a game fee, then when the game begins, the number of issues you had coming when you joined will be added to your subscription once the game ends. After your name in the Directory will appear some such notation as "2004C-T+6".

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THE 2005 IGNOBEL PRIZES (continued from p. 3)

makes him "the most powerful chief of espionage ever in the history of a nominally 'democratic' country, with complete control not only over espionage operations of all his nation's agencies but also over which of their findings reach the President." Later, allegations of Negroponte's complete control were challenged by spokesmen for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the espionage agencies of each of the U. S. armed forces, Section 10-10 of NASA, and the National Security Agency, whose official spokesman denied that any such agency exists. The award was accepted for Negroponte by George Tenet, who had won it in 2004.

The Genocide Prize went to Representative Tom Tancredo, who recently managed overwhelming approval in the House of Representatives of a bill to round up, arrest, and deport an estimated 11 to 20 million undocumented aliens in the United States, but without specifying who is going to do this. The award was accepted for him by Noh Kan-du, Third Assistant Graffiti Remover of the Great Wall of China. Comrade Noh

expressed his appreciation for Representative Tancredo's understanding of China's historic immigration policy, but ventured doubt that, a thousand years from now, tourists would come from all over the world to see the Great Wall of America.

The prize for Provocation, in the sense of the French term *agent provocateur*, went to General Paul Bremer, former U. S. military governor of Iraq and winner of the 2003 War Prize. General Bremer recently stated that America cannot keep order in Iraq with fewer than 500,000 troops on the ground. Such numbers could be obtained only with military conscription, which would provoke resistance so strong that President Bush will feel justified in canceling those civil liberties that have thus far escaped his attention, producing a very profitable civil war in America.

The prize for Military Science usually goes to the invention of a radical new weapon of war. This year, however, it was awarded to U. S. Secretary of War Donald H. Rumsfeld as the source and inspiration of orders authorizing the use of a very old weapon, torture, in interrogating prisoners of war and suspected terrorists in America. "This radical restoration of a practice formerly held in disfavor, if not actually banned, in the traditions of Anglo-Saxon law," Ignobel proclaimed, "is a credit to the ingenuity of the high office-holders of the Bush Administration, and a blow to those who are so foolish as to believe that a nation can allow civil liberties and still be governed efficiently."

The next stop on the winter tourist itinerary in the Four And A Half Kingdoms was the annual Circus Bowl game in Roma Temporaria, traditionally held in the Circus Minimus, the only Roman arena still in use. This year's score was Lions 10, Christians 1. The only Christian score was made by Rev. Pat Robertson, who called down a curse on one of the Lions, causing it to suffer a fatal stroke, and deluging the arena with seven inches of rain in 35 minutes, a downpour later named "Hurricane Anne" for Anne Coulter.

The last and newest event was a rock concert in the Kingdom of Pundschruk, traditional since the monarchy was restored during a riot at a rock concert in 2001. As usual, King Otto VIII performed on lead guitar. Before the restoration, he had been notorious as a computer hacker, virus designer, and leader of the rock group Your Motherboard Wears Army Reboots. Other, still exiled, royals were also among the performers. This year, five exiled and probably illegitimate Stuarts, performing as "The Young Pretenders", won riotous applause with a rap version of "Charlie Is My [Expletive Deleted] Darling".

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY (continued from p. 9)

in Reisterstown are just pikers. A new children's book, *Mr. Chickee's Funny Money* by Christopher Paul Curtis, features an annoying genius child who discovers a "one quadrillion dollar bill", a "genuine" currency note "accidentally slipped into circulation". The author's inspiration was probably the \$100,000 bill, which is used for transactions among Federal Reserve Banks but not in general circulation. However, one quadrillion dollars is approximately the value of the entire united States and everything in it.

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